

Applic. No. 10/694,613
Amdt. dated February 12, 2007
Reply to Office action of December 12, 2006

Remarks/Arguments:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1, 2, 6-9, 11, and 12 remain in the application. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 3-5 and 10 were previously cancelled.

In the second paragraph on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, claims 1, 2, 6, and 12 have been rejected as being fully anticipated by Spiegel et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,011,125) (hereinafter "Spiegel") under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

In a phone call on February 5, 2007 with the Examiner, the Examiner indicated that the listing of claim 12 in the above-noted rejection is an oversight and that claim 12 is allowed.

The rejection has been noted and the claims have been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. The claims are patentable for the reasons set forth below. Support for the changes is found on Fig. 2 of the instant application.

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Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, *inter alia*:

a mechanism guiding the after-gripper bar together with the after-grippers along the annular after-gripper path.

It is once again noted that the corporate assignee of the Spiegel reference is also the assignee of the instant application. Therefore, applicants are very familiar with the Spiegel reference.

On page 5 of the Office action, the Examiner stated that Spiegel discloses that the shaft moves in a back and forth motion between the limits of the joint (17d).

Spiegel discloses that the back and forth motion of the joint (17d) is arc-shaped. Therefore, the joint (17d) and the shaft travel back and forth on the same arc-shaped path. Accordingly, Spiegel does not disclose that the shaft travels on an annular path.

The reference does not show a mechanism guiding the after-gripper bar together with the after-grippers along the annular

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after-gripper path, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application. The Spiegel reference discloses that the shaft moves back and forth on an arc-shaped path. Spiegel does not disclose that the shaft moves on an annular path. This is contrary to the invention of the instant application as claimed, in which a mechanism guides the after-gripper bar together with the after-grippers along the annular after-gripper path.

Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable, dependent claims 2 and 6-9 are believed to be allowable as well.

In the last paragraph on page 3 of the Office action, claim 7 has been rejected as being obvious over Spiegel (U.S. Patent No. 5,011,125) in view of Blaser (U.S. Patent No. 5,011,125) under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Blaser does not make up for the deficiencies of Spiegel. Since claim 1 is believed to be allowable, dependent claim 7 is believed to be allowable as well.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claim 1. Claim 1 is, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since

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all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claim
1, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of
claims 1, 2, and 6-9 are solicited.

It is appreciatively noted from page 4 of the Office action
that claims 11 and 12 are allowed.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims
to be unpatentable, counsel respectfully requests a telephone
call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked
out.

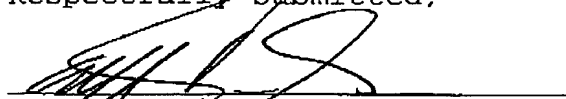
If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition
for extension is herewith made.

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Please charge any other fees which might be due with respect
to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner

Greenberg Sterner LLP, No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,


For Applicant(s)

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